In The PICTure

December 2026/January 2027

Delivered free to every home in Letham and district by Fortar All Souls" LETHAM Charity SCO02417)

ITP was established in 1995



If I'd know how much fun grandchildren would be, I'd have had them first.

Next Issue of "In The Picture"
Deadline for February issue

Saturday 16th January 2027

Material to be sent to Elaine Saunders
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elaine.saunders@outlook.com
And to Jeannie Mair
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From Maggie Hunt

Merry Christmas!

It's December and the church is buzzing with events, activities and celebrations – and you are invited! We'd love to see you this Advent and Christmas, even if church isn't your kind of thing.

We start our Christmas journey at the end of November with our first Sunday of Advent service which includes some new carols from our local singing group. We're even going to try learning one as a congregation which we will sing each week in December to practice it.

We fling open the doors to invite everyone in for Cakes and Carols on Thursday 10th December at 2pm. An afternoon of carols, fun and festive treats.

Our 'Come and Join In DIY Nativity' is on Sunday 20th December at 10.30am and everyone is invited to come along, join in and even take part in our nativity play as the story unfolds.

Christmas Eve we are again hosting a village 'get together' at 6.30pm…and following last year's sing-a-long we're going to reduce the number of songs, increase the fun and games and leave some time just for chatting and being together on Christmas Eve.An old fashioned village party.

We are also open at 11.30pm on Christmas Eve for a short service to see in the big day itself.It's always lovely to light the candles, crack our glow-sticks and remember that however dark it might seem in our world, there is always light when we care for each other.

We are holding a short gathering on Christmas morning too – just 30mins – to hear again the Christmas story, sing some favourite carols and wish each other a Merry Christmas. Why not join us at 10am.

What did Adam say to his wife the day before Christmas? It's Christmas Eve.

'In the PICTure'

Welcomes items of news and expressions of opinion from organisations and individuals within the community, provided such articles are signed. Published items do not necessarily reflect the views of the Communications Group or the Kirk Session of Forfar All Souls @ Letham

CROSSREACH REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION 2026

For more than 150 years, CrossReach has walked alongside people through some of life's hardest moments. On behalf of the Church of Scotland, CrossReach provides social care services in Christ's name, to people with a variety of needs; those dealing with problems of mental health, old age, homelessness, addictions, criminal justice, domestic violence and drug dependency - some for a short time, some for years.

Last year, CrossReach services provided one-to-one expert support to 1,949 people though their counselling and mental health services. That's 1,929 stories of hope, resilience and recovery. In addition 237 young people and families were supported through CrossReach early years services and residential homes for young people with complex needs; plus 243 children and adults with disabilities, 390 people struggling with homelessness and substance use and 834 older people through care homes and community support groups.

That is an awful lot of people who need the support of CrossReach and the generosity of people like us.

To put that in the context of Scotland's social care landscape, figures published in September 2025 show 1,707 drug deaths for 2024, tragically, still the highest in Europe.It is projected that the number of people aged 75 and over will rise by 341,300 over the 25 year period between mid-2022 and mid-2047. The percentage of people reporting mental health conditions more than doubled in Scotland and increased sixfold in young people between 2011 and 2022. This upsurge was the largest increase across all health condition types. Nearly 1 in 4 children are living in poverty, and poverty rates amongst the Scottish Government's priority families remain particularly high. Over half of all children in poverty live in a household where someone is disabled. Scotland's prison population in 2025 hit record high levels, reaching 8,441 in November 2025. The need is very real.

Our church supports CrossReach in a few ways. Financially, through our Wilson & Peter Bequest, we give a lump sum of £500 in alternate years to support the Bluebell Perinatal Service in Glasgow. We have also donated the offerings from our Christmas Services to CrossReach in recent years, and will do so again this year - and currently a proportion of the tea and coffee donations after the service go to CrossReach. Some of us also take the opportunity to support the work of CrossReach by buying cards and other merchandise.

CrossReach services and their wonderfully caring staff and volunteers, take practical action where people need support most. Their purpose is 'to demonstrate Christ's love in action by offering high quality care and support'- so people across Scotland can find stability, grow in confidence, and live fuller lives.' And we pray that they can keep doing so for generations to come.

Thank you

Irene McGugan





Remembrance Sunday 08 November 2026

As in previous years, Rev. Maggie led the service on *Poppy Sunday*. Around thirty young people from the Letham Scouting groups along with Explorer Scouts Finn and Evie representing the army cadet force , joined the local congregation in Letham Church before recessing to Dempster Park War Memorial for 11a.m.There, they were joined by around fifty local people and two football teams, *Anchor Athletic* and *Kirrie Unfortunates*, who heard the Rev Maggie read out the names of the fallen, listed on the war memorial, before observing the two minutes silence. Four members of the Scouting Association were dutiful flag bearers Susannah, Jack, Henry and Zack. Wreaths were then laid from all local organisations, whilst poppy batons made by the Beavers were also laid in front of the Memorial. Rev Maggie led the National Anthem before inviting those present, if they so wished, to join her in a prayer which included thanks to all folk who served, and those actively serving our country, in different ways, before closing with a blessing to all.

For folk remaining in the Church, Rev. Thomas held the two minute silence. Thanks are due to Joan Smith for her poppy displays in the Church and congratulations to all young folk for their patience and attention throughout.

TALES OF LETHAM (I)

"In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks." John Muir

Water: Part 1

It is obvious that many people all over this world misunderstand the origins of and the modern day need for water. For example, it is not easy for most Scots to understand the various water scenarios gone through in our long-term history. Most people in Letham fail to realise that the entire country of Scotland was, away in the past, covered with three miles of ice. This was during the ice age, and the outcome of its presence is revealed in many aspects of the land which we know today as Scotland. For example, many gravel paths consist of pebbles of many colours and obviously a variety of origins – either soft sandstone; hard white christaline pebbles and pebbles with metal glinting from them. Where do these rounded pebbles come from? During the melting of three miles of ice, and the consequent rushing torrents of water, these chuckie stanes paths were formed, as if they had emerged from and had been smoothed by a giant, turbulent washing machine. Other examples of this massive amount of water include glaciers sliding slowly towards the sea, smoothing out softer stones whilst making little impact on hard stone. One example is Dunnichen Hill, which is of hard stone, while the surrounding soft stone was swept away. The melting and sliding ice left many hard stone mountains. There were many areas where water was trapped, like the Flow Country in the north of Scotland or a smaller example on our own doorstep is what was known as Nechtansmere - that is the big swamp that used to exist between Dunnichen and the Girdle Stane. Much of this has been drained and turned into very fertile land, but its core water entrapment area still exists, and the outcome was that when Letham was first mooted, around 1788, the area around Letham was rather soggy and in need of drainage to make it habitable. We will deal with drainage and cultivatable land advancements in the Letham area, in the next instalment.

JAMcG

Love is what's in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents for a minute and look around. – attributed to Bobby, a 7-year-old

Christmas in Letham

Christmas light switch on – Friday 4th December at 6pm. Gathering from 5.30pm

Letham Seniors Christmas Party – Saturday 5th December. See Isobel Sword for information.

Cakes and Carols - Thursday 10th December at 2pm.An afternoon of carols, fun and festive treats at Letham Church.

Christmas Brew and Blether – Friday 18th December at 2pm at Letham Church Hall

Our 'Come and Join In DIY Nativity' - Sunday 20th December at 10.30am at Letham Church

Christmas Eve Village 'get together' – Thursday 24th December at 6.30pm at Letham Church

Watchnight Worship – Thursday December 24th at 11.30pm at Letham Church

Christmas Morning Church – Friday 25th December at 10am at Letham Church

Christmas Lessons and Carols – Sunday 27th December at 10.30am at Letham Church Everyone is welcome.

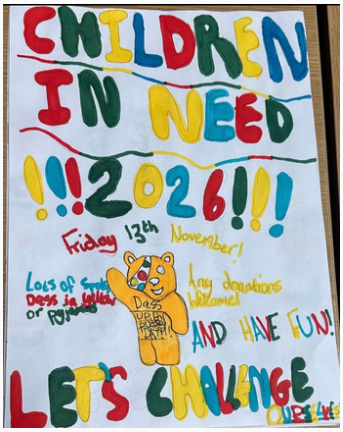


Letham Church would like to thank Key Store for all their help in 2026, providing milk and collecting our donation envelopes. We would also like to thank Keptie Bakery for all the bread and cakes supplied to Warm spaces at the beginning of 2026.

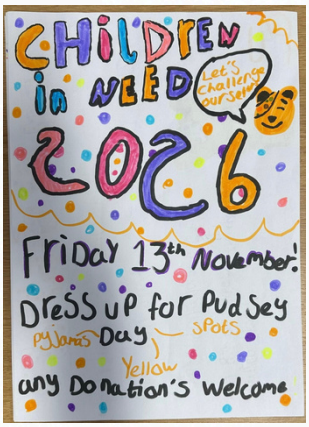
My grandchildren laugh at my failing memory. But they won't be laughing at Christmas when there are no eggs under the bonfire.

Letham Primary School

Mrs D Williamson Depute Head Teacher











Children in classes P2/3, 5 & 6 undertook several challenges across the week leading up to Children in Need 2026. They all had great fun and put in much effort in completing these challenges.



Children in P2/3 with their "Pudsey Puppets"



Letham Seniors

Music & Memories is taking a short break until the first Friday in February - 5th. This is due to preparations for the Christmas Party on 5th December and New Year's Day

LETHAM CHURCH

Following on from last month, here is the next article on highlights in the church.
You are welcome to come and see them for yourself every Sunday and at other times by arrangement.

PANEL 2

The patterns from the cross on the reverse of the Aberlemno stone are seen on this panel.
The theme is Easter, with the cross in the centre and the sun symbolising the joy of Jesus' resurrection.
The bread and overflowing communion cup represent his sacrifice.
The dove and the monks are bringing the message of Christianity.
The symbol of the Trinity (top left) was much used by the Picts.

Mrs. Christine Moodie, Dunnichen, Letham and Kirkden Church Banner Group Leader.





LETHAM GARDENING CLUB

On Tuesday 10th November we hosted Peter Moug from Angus Council, who gave an interesting and informative talk on the waste disposal systems in Angus.
His talk covered all the different coloured bins from green to food bins, and what should be in them, and what shouldn't be in them. This left many of us thinking about why we are so far behind countries like Finland and Germany when it comes to our rubbish disposal.
On Tuesday 8th December we welcome back Steve Ludlum for another master class in flower arranging. Steve is both entertaining and exceptionally good at making it look like we could all do it. He also provides us with some excellent Christmas arrangements as raffle prizes.
Come and join us in the Bowling Club at 7.30 and bring a friend.

Bill Muir
07908339420



One of Joan Smith's displays in Church on Remembrance Sunday

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Letham and District Scottish Women's Institute

On Tuesday 3rd November the Ladies of Letham and District SWI were disappointed that our speaker for the evening, from Angus Small Repairs, was unable to attend. However, despite the short notice, Lynne Webster, long-term member and former president, came to the rescue with an enjoyable demonstration and workshop on making paper flowers. Gail Doig, a member of Letham Community Choir, judged the evening's competitions with the following results –

Flower of the Month -1st Francis, 2nd Jeannie, 3rd Lynne.
2 Potato Scones – 1st Lindsay, 2nd Jeannie, 3rd Francis.
Knitted Headband – 1st Lynne, 2nd Colette, 3rd Lindsay.

At our next meeting on December 1st, we will hold a very early Christmas Party where the competitions will be 3 savoury canapes, a wrapped gift for Secret Santa (only the wrapping will be judged, and a pot plant in flower. We will continue our Christmas celebrations with a trip to "Jack and the Beanstalk" in the Reid Hall on December 12th.

On January 6th we will hold a games night where the competitions will be a fresh flower corsage, an 8" x 10" mounted photo on the subject "At Work" and a garden flower of the month.

May we take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Maybe your resolution could be to come along and give "The Rural" a try.

Dorothy Goss

lethamswi.org.letham@gmail.com



Know that even when you are in the kitchen, our Lord moves amidst the pots and pans. – Teresa of Avila

Winter Brew & Blether

The weekly Brew & Blether
every Friday 2 – 3.30pm in The Church Hall
run by Letham Church until April 2027
All ages & abilities welcome, every week.
Good company, no charge.

All Souls Church Guild

Christine Donaladson gave a very interesting talk on the history of tartan and Strathmore Woollens.

We had a fun afternoon with 30 members taking part in a "Let us Build a House" beetle drive in aid of the Guild Flower Fund.

We look forward to hosting the Joint Guild Project meeting and learning about the Release International – Operation Hope Project and how being a Church of Scotland Guild Project partner has helped the work they do.

The last meeting for 2026 on 2 December is Christmas Carols and Crackers in @ Lowson Hall

We look forward to our pre-booked Christmas Meal at the British Legion on 16 December before our usual extended Christmas break.

Diary Dates for 2027
17 February – Both Sides of the Tweed Choir
3 March - Mountain Rescue Service – Paul Morgan

Very Best wishes for Christmas and the New year from all at the All Souls Church Guild

Linda Stewart
Minute Secretary
lindas28@btinternet.com

"IN THE PICTure"
ANNUAL ENVELOPE APPEAL

"Thank you" to everyone who once again responded so generously to the annual envelope appeal.

This year the total raised was £850. As we are able to claim additional income through the "Gift Aid" scheme, this should bring in a further £ 170 (approximately), making a final total of around £1,020.

This is an increase on the total for last year and a very impressive amount – especially given the challenging financial situation which affects so many families currently.

This money contributes to the ongoing printing costs of the magazine which are now just over £233 per month. However this Appeal total when added to the income from the local businesses that support us through their advertising, means we are able to maintain the magazine in a financially sound position.

In addition to being a sponsor, Key Store also hosts our collection box, and we are most grateful for this additional help.

We really are very appreciative of this generosity and of the endorsement and support of the magazine which will allow us to continue producing "In the PICTure" and deliver it free of charge to every home in the parish.

THANK YOU!
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